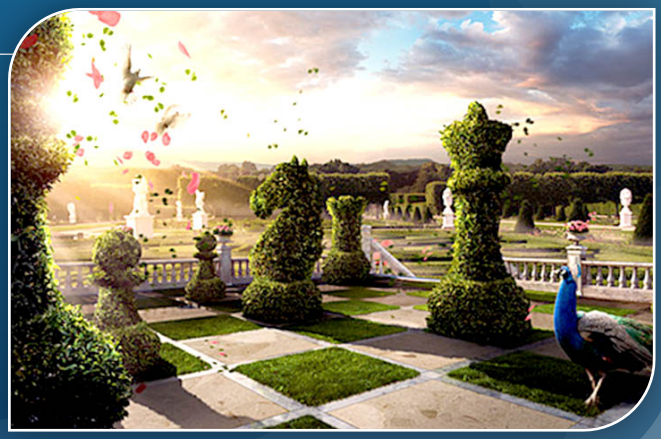
Oklahoma Chess Monthly

APRIL 2021

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma



Signs of CHESS SPRING?

In This Issue:

- Chess Spring
- What's The Best Move?
- IM Donaldson Book Review
- Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

Signs of Chess Spring?

Ah, the first signs of the coming Spring:

The first robin redbreast at your birdfeeder…

The first flowerbuds rising in your garden…

The first over-the-board chess players…

Yes, the signs of a possible thaw in the long pandemic winter that has lasted for a year and a return of actual chess in this region are becoming ever more prevalent. Is the encouraging news for real?

Maybe. There is still a lot of uncertainty, and the chances of another spike could still chill these hopes. I'm told even the U.S. Open in August may be canceled if the shutdown in New Jersey is not lifted. That would be a problem for all the young high school champions who compete in its national scholastic championships. So everything that follows is still tentative – as well as enticing.

However, locally, actual OTB events are coming

"Oklahoma's Official Chess Bulletin Covering Oklahoma Chess on a Regular Schedule Since 1982"

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Oklahoma Chess Foundation

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starting up this month and get going strong in July with three big events scheduled: The Kansas Open, the Queen City Open, and the U.S. Class Championship (in Houston).

OCA is trying to schedule its annual tournament for the last weekend in June (still unconfirmed as yet). Current plans are for it to be In Broken Arrow as last year.

OCF's first tournament OTB this year is now scheduled for August, the Steve Wharry ConSat Classic (Aug 7, Aug 14) in Tulsa at the Harvard Ave Baptist Church. This will be a "ConSat" tournament (four games held on two consecutive Saturdays, with full time controls). I'm hoping we will not have to use Covid restrictions, but we shall see.

OCF is also planning three or four other events this year: First, a one-day event on National Chess Day (October 9). Later there will be two other traditional major weekend Swiss tournaments — *The Jerry Spann Memorial,* and *The Frank K Berry Memorial*, in the October-November time frame; one in OKC and one in Tulsa. As of this writing we are working on securing the venues for these two events. We lost our previous venue at the Wyndham in Tulsa and are seeking a new one. We also are seeking a good OKC site that is larger. The annual Holiday Open should return on Dec 18, in Tulsa.

OSCO has been struggling this season, and has not held any events. However, this week OSCO President Chris Amburgy announced the following system for choosing the annual champions:

> "The OSCO board is moving ahead with plans to hold an online event for all Oklahoma scholastic players on Saturday, April 24th. The event will be held on chess.com and will include 4 rounds of rapid chess (25+5 time control). The top two players in each section that were not in OSCO premier during the 2019-20 season will earn a spot in a OTB event held on May 24th — where they will join premier players from the 2019-20 season — to determine Oklahoma's representatives for the 2021 USCF national invitational tournaments. To compete for the entry spots, players will be required to follow online anti-cheating protocols, including use of a camera providing full view of the player and computer screen."

In other words, the final tournament in May is OTB and includes 'premier' players; but there is an online tourney in April that non-premier players can use to qualify for that final event also.

OSCO also says they hope to return to a full schedule of scholastic events next season.

So it looks like most of the activity starts up in Summer — However, this Spring there are some OTB events sprouting as well:

April 9-11	Texas Golden Open	(Fort Worth TX)
April 17-18	2021 Missouri State University Open	(Springfield MO)
May 5-9	Missouri Grand Championship – $10,000	(Columbia MO)
May 28-31	76th Texas State Championships	(Fort Worth TX)

What's the Best Move?

by Tom Braunlich

Back in the day, in the chess dark ages of the 1970s, GM Larry Evans had a monthly feature in *Chess Life* called "What's The Best Move?" This was a popular new form of chess puzzle. Instead of a composed position, he would take actual interesting game positions and ask you what you would play, with a multiple-choice selection of options. Then he would explain each choice, whether it was good or bad.

It was popular because it was realistic and educational. As in a real tournament game, you never knew if the solution would be spectacular, or practical; difficult or easy. Some options were traps or red herrings. Sometimes a defensive move was preferred over attacking. Sometimes more than one move was good, but there was one he considered best.

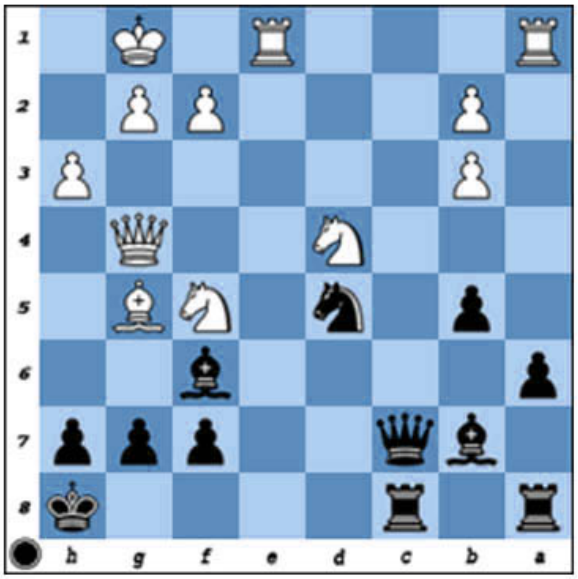
Several weeks ago I started making these for our Foolish Things chess club in Tulsa, which has been meeting online via Zoom for many months now. The group would vote on their choices and then we would reveal and discuss the answers. My analysis is more detailed than Evans' was, and I hope more entertaining.

It proved very popular! (A twist I added is the option "Something else" similar to "none of the above." So here is a selection of six "What's The Best Move?" puzzles for you.

Give them some time — try to come to a definite conclusion and make your choice. Then, CHECK THE ANSWERS (staring page 5) to see how well you did. *(Let me know if you like these.)*

1

What's the Best Move?



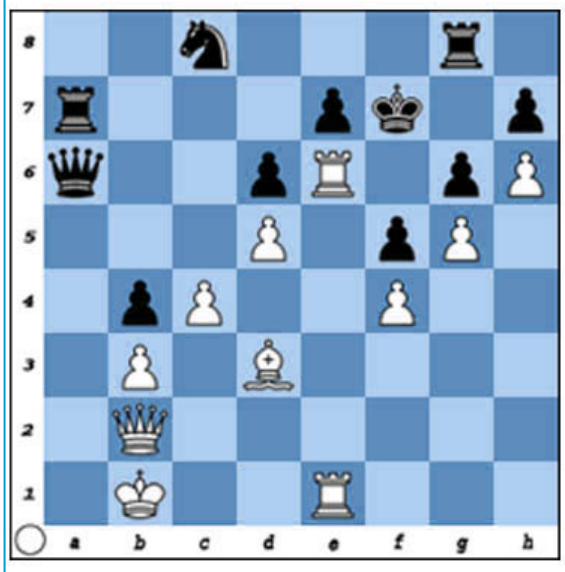
Eugene Amburn - Dale Ruth, OKC 1956

BLACK to Move : Choose One:

A) Defend the B on f6!	Qd8
B) Defend the B on f6!	Qb6
C) Oust the White Knight!	g6
D) Trade off his attackers!	Bxd4
E) Something else!	?

2

What's the Best Move?



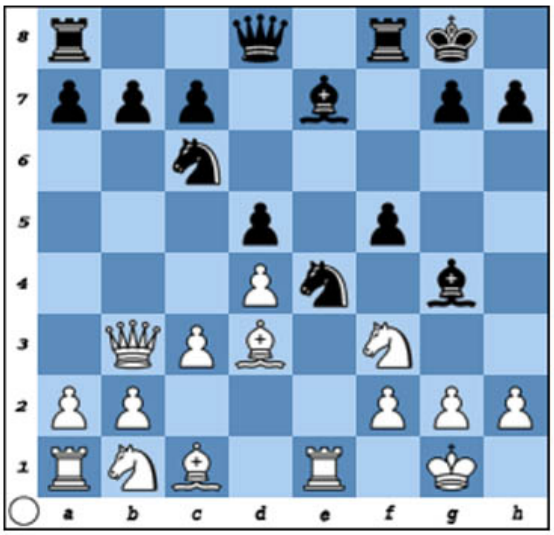
Rozsa - Warren, OKC U.S.Open 1956

WHITE to Move : Choose One:

A) Attack!	Rf6+
B) Attack!	Qf6+
C) Threaten c4-c5!	R1e3
D) Blow him open!	Bxf5
E) Something else!	?

3

What's the Best Move?



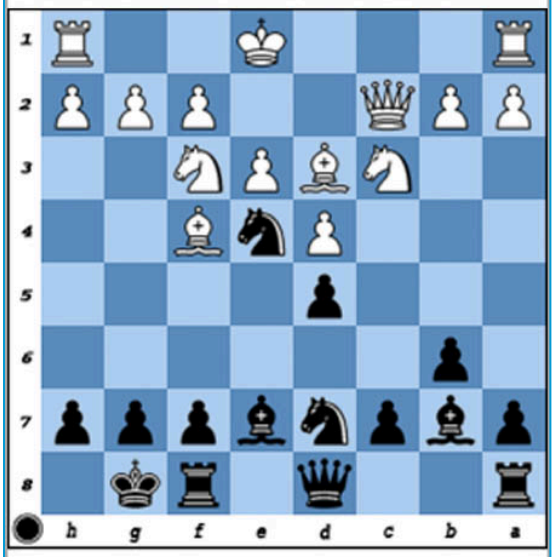
Em. Lasker - Pillsbury, Hastings 1895

WHITE to Move : Choose One:

A) Activate the Bishop!	Bf4
B) Develop a piece!	Nbd2
C) Snatch a pawn on b7!	Qxb7
D) Snatch a center pawn!	Bxe4
E) Post Up in the Center!	Ne5

4

What's the Best Move?



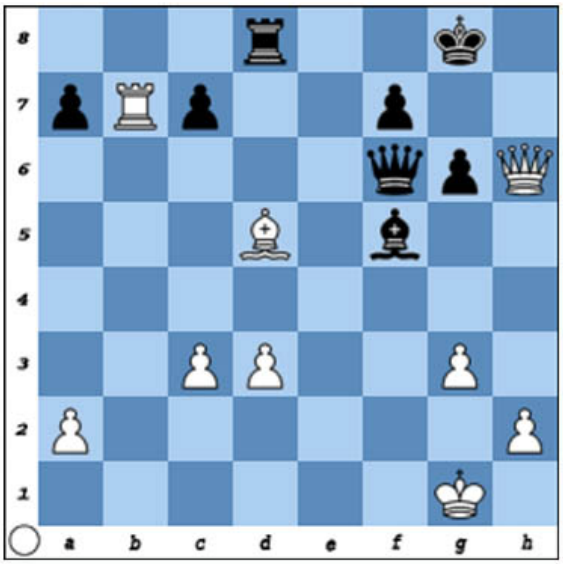
Sultan Khan - Capablanca, 1930

Black to Move : Choose One:

A) Defend the knight!	...Ndf6
B) Strengthen the center!	...f5
C) Attack!	...g5
D) Exchange his knight!	...Nxc3
E) Develop a Rook!	...Re8

5

What's the Best Move?



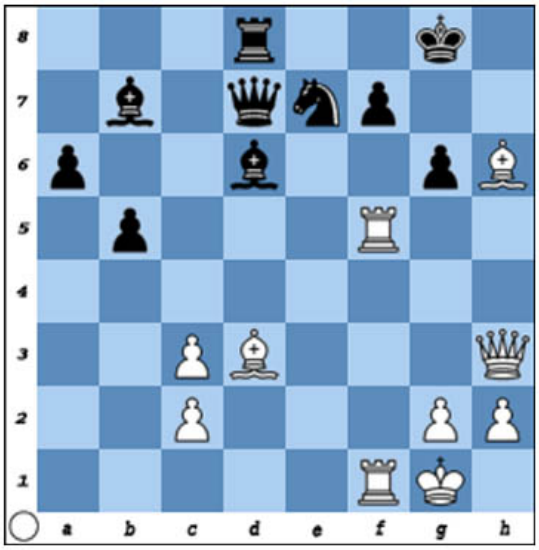
Mecking - Tan, Interzonal 1973

WHITE to Move : Choose One:

A) Grab a pawn!	Rxa7
B) Move the attacked bishop!	Bc4
C) Protect the bishop!	c3-c4
D) Protect the king!	Bg2
E) Sacrifice!	Bxf7+

6

What's the Best Move?



John Nunn - James Plaskett, 1977

WHITE to Move : Choose One:

A) Grab the Seventh Rank!	Rxf7
B) Retreat and Protect Q!	R5f3
C) Retreat and protect g2!	R5f2
D) Go for the Attack!	Rh5
E) Something Else	?

WHAT'S THE BEST MOVE? — ANSWERS

1) Eugene Amburn – Dale Ruth, OKC 1957. ANSWER: D

Background: Eugene Amburn was NM Tom Amburn's father, and with this key win he won the State Championship title in 1957.

A) 1…Qd8? Fails tactically to 2. Re8+!, Qxe8 3. Bxf6 and there's no defense to mate now.

B) 1…Qb6? Is what was played in the game. But this gave Amburn the opportunity for a spectacular win: 2. Re6!! (disrupting protection of that bishop) 2…fxe6 3. Bxf6, Rc7 4. Bxg7+ Kg8 5. Nh6 mate. Bravo!

C) 1…g6 is too weakening and fails to 2. Bxf6+ Nxf6 3. Qh4 (threatening both Qxf6 and Re7).

D) 1…Bxd4! Is the best defense. After 2. Qxd4, f6 Black's Q gives lateral protection to the sensitive g7 square, and he has set up a defense with minimum damage to the kingside position. The white B has to retreat and its only a slight edge for white after 3. Bh4, Qd7 4. Qg4, Re8 etc.

E) 1…Bxg5 could be tried. Similar to (D) above but not as good. After 2. Qxg5, f6 3. Qh4 white maintains lots of threats against black's K, with a rook lift by Re4-g4 on the agenda.

2) Bela Rozsa – Jim Warren, U.S. Open held in OKC, 1956. ANSWER: D

Background: Bela Rozsa was the many-time state champion, and here is playing an expert from Illinois.

A) 1.Rf6+ was played in the game, but it isn't the best move. After the forced reply 1…Ke8 white is stuck for a follow-up move. The game continued 2.Kc2, Qa2 3. c5!? Qxb2+ 4.Kxb2, dxc5 5.Rc6 and here 5…Kf7 would have been equal. Rozsa went on to win after 5…Kd8?

B) 1.Qf6+ would be spectacular, but black is not going to fall into your little mate trap! (1…exf6?? 2.Rxf6#) It would prove a bust after 1…Ke8 as the white Q isn't doing much there and will have to retreat or get traded off.

C) 1.R1e3 threatening c4-c5 (by protecting the B) is interesting and would be a good try if it weren't for the fact there was something much better. 1…Qa3 2.c5,Qxb2 3.Kxb2,dxc4 4.d6!? Kd8 with an edge for white that gives some winning chances.

D) 1.Bxf5!! is a spectacular breakthrough on the kingside. The idea is to queen white's h-pawn! 1. …gxf5 2.g6,hxg6 3.h7, Rf8 and now 4. Rg1! (not rushing yet) is the final crusher.

E) What else did you see?

3) Emanuel Lasker – H.N.Pillsbury, Hastings 1895 ANSWER: B

Background: Pillsbury was the American genius who was destroying all the top players at this time, as happens this game, and may have become world champion had he not died young at age 30.

A) 1.Bf4? If you chose this one, you are in good company. It's what Lasker played, and it's a blunder, allowing his kingside to get wrecked. The continuation was 1…Bxf3 2.gxf3,Ng5 3.Kg2,Qd7 4.Qc2,Ne6 5.Bc1,Bd6 6.Nd2,Rae8 7.Nf1,Nxd4!

TOP 25

For APRIL 2020

Active Oklahoma Players				
	Player	This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	0	
2	Howard Zhong	2307	0	
3	Ryan Amburgy	2209	12	▲
4	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	▼
5	Mark Hulsey	2190	0	
6	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	
7	Veronika Zilajeva	2080	0	
8	Tom Patton	2077	0	
9	Charles D Unruh	2063	0	
10	James Long	2054	0	
11	Michael Nugent	2042	0	
12	Charles M Unruh	2024	0	
13	Matt Dalthorp	2015	0	
14	Chuck Johnson	2010	0	
15	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	
16	Stephen Gehly	2000	0	
17	David Luscomb	1995	0	▲
18	Logan Zachare	1991	-4	▼
19	Joe Dean Veal	1940	0	
20	Paul Hodgden	1935	0	
21	Maxwell Barnes	1928	9	▲
22	Wayne Hatcher	1926	0	▼
23	Harold Brown Jr.	1901	0	
24	Adley Bufford	1873	7	
25	Maxwell Xie	1862	0	▲

Player of the Month

MAXWELL BARNES

With no fewer than nine USCF-rated events in March, Max is the busiest player around and no doubt getting into a groove. I expect him to fly over 2000 this Summer.

8.Qd1,Rxe1 9.Qxe1,Nxf3! 10.Kxf3,f4 and black won quickly. One of Lasker's worst defeats.

B) 1.Nbd2. Correct. In view of what happened in A above it is clear white needs to protect his kingside, even if doing so temporarily blocks in his queen's bishop. The move does threaten to capture on e4 so it does limit black's choices. The game is about even.

C) 1.Qxb7. You are greedy! Only computers get away with this kind of thing… for a pawn black gets further ahead in development and can immediately bring pieces up for a kingside initiative with 1…Rf6 2. Bf4,Bxf3 3. gxf3, Bd6 etc. Big edge to black.

D) 1.Bxe4. Did you think this was going to win a pawn? If you did, then you need to work more on being aware of the opponent's resources. 1…fxe4 2. Rxe4? Na5 is the problem. Otherwise it is not good to trade off your good bishop and open up his f-file for him.

E) 1.Ne5. Outposting on this spot is a good idea but premature. What needs to finish development first. Black already can meet this move with strong tactics: 1…Nxe5 2.dxe5,Bc5! 3. Be3,Bxe3 4.Rxe3,Nxf2! 5.Kxf2 f4! With an attack.

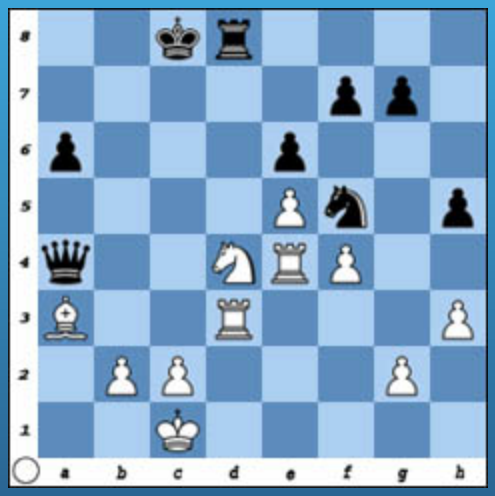
4) Sultan Khan – Capablanca, 1930 **ANSWER: D**

Background: Sultan Khan was an indentured servant from India, who was a natural genius at chess. When he was not in India he would be allowed to compete in international events and could play with the best, as for example this win over former world champion Capa.

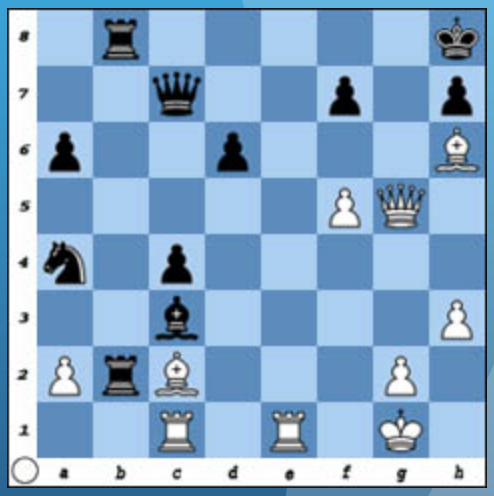
A) 1… Ndf6. After the game, Capablanca said this is the move he should have played. So if you picked it you are in good company – but both of you need to work on your

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page



White to move and win. (Easy)



White to move and win. (Difficult)

tactics! This move loses a pawn to 2. Bxc7! Qxc7 3. Nxe4! Qxc2 and now before recapturing the queen you insert 4.Nxf6+ and then 5.Qxc2 with an easy pawn-up win.

B) 1…f5. This is the move Capablanca played. The problem with it is that it unprotects the e6 square which white immediately exploited with 2.Nb5! to which black can no longer respond with 2…c6 because of 3.Nc7,Rc8 4.Ne6. Instead after 2.Nb5 Capa played 2…Bd6 but after 3.Nxd6, cxd6 Khan had a big positional advantage and eventually won.

C) 1…g5. This is interesting, but too weakening. The idea is to follow after 2.Bg3 with 2…f5 now, as 3.Nb5 no longer works in reply. But instead 3.h4,Nxg3 4.fxg3,g4 5. Nd2 gives a different kind of positional plus for white.

D) 1…Nxc3!? I think this is the move Capa should have played. The position gets very tactical very fast, but after a forced sequence ends up in a complex ending that would have given counter chances for Black: 2.Bxh7+,Kh8 3.bxc3,g6 4.Bxg6,fxg6 5.Qxg6,Rf6. This position is worth study. White has 3 pawns for the B, and a wide-open black king. According to the computer, white has one road to retain an edge that he would have to find: 6.Qh5+,Kg7 7.Ne5!,Nxe5 8.Bxe5,Bd6 9.Qg5+,Kf7 10.Qxf6+ leading to an ending with Rook and 3 pawns for two highly active black bishops. I think Capa might have held this – don't underestimate those 2Bs! The computer gives white only a slight edge (+0.55). I think this was black's best chance.

E) 1…Re8. This is not bad. Black indirectly protects the N on e4 (if white captures everything there black gets his Q in the end with …Bb4+). However, after 2.0-0 white is threatening both the N on e4 as well as Nb5. Black will have to sacrifice the exchange, which is dubious, after 2…Ndf6 3.Nb5,c5 4.Nc7

5) Mecking – Tan, Interzonal 1973 ANSWER: B

Background: Henrique Mecking was a prodigy from Brazil who actually won this big Interzonal tournament ahead of many greats and qualified for the Candidates playoffs (where he

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) 1. Nxe6! White's dancing knight reveals two simultaneous threats — one on the Q on a4, and one on the Rook on d8. 1…Qxe4 2. Rxd8+, Kb7 3. Nc5+ and white forks the Q with a winning game.

(2) This is a classic. Black's B on c3 is busy guarding against mate on g7. White could force mate with 1.f6 IF it weren't for the fact black can reply 1…Qc5+ trading queens. So the question is, can white prevent that defense while still maintaining mate threats? Yes…
1. Re5!! Here the rook interferes with both of the key lines in question. White threatens Qf6 mate. Black has to play 1…Bxe5 but that move blocks Black's queen's intended defense. So then 2. f6 now forces mate, because …Qc5+ doesn't work anymore.

The "Chess Fools of Tulsa" are a fun social chess club that currently is meeting on ZOOM
Saturday mornings, 9:00am to Noon
Join us for puzzles, GM spectating, and more

Club play on Zoom is easy!
Get on our weekly email list, in which I send out puzzles we will discuss, plus local chess news and info on how to join us on Zoom.

Inquiries:
tom.braunlich@cox.net

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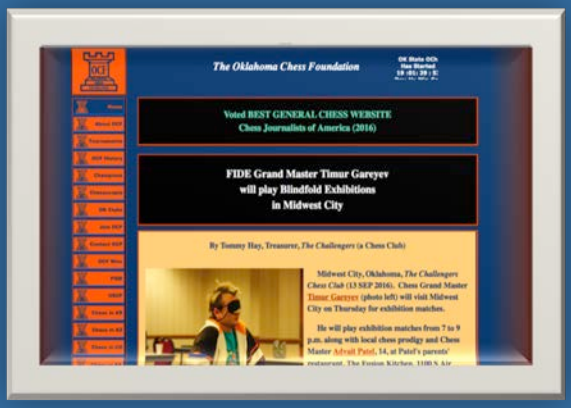
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eventually lost a match to Korchnoi). At the time many were predicting him to become a real contender for the world title, but unfortunately his career was interrupted by a neuromuscular disease (myasthenia gravis), which forced him to withdraw from top competitions.

A) 1.Rxa7? Pawn grabber! This loses the rook to 1…Qb6+.

B) 1.Bc4. White's bishop was under attack and this is the best way to defend it — and it sets a diabolical trap. Did you see that? His opponent fell into the trap in the actual game: 1…Qxc3? 2.Bxf7+!, Kxf7 3.Rxc7+! Qxc7 4. Qh7+ skewering the Q and winning. Instead, Black should have tried 1…Bxd3 2.Bxd3,Rxd3 3.Rb8+,Rd8 4.Qf4,Qe7 5.Rxd8,Qxd8 6. Qd4,Qb8 with only a tiny edge for white.

C) 1.c4. This is not a good way to protect the B. With a simple exchange sac black would get a winning game: 1…Rxd5 2.cxd5,Qd4+ 3.Kg2,Qxd5+ etc.

D) 1.Bg2. If you are going to retreat the B this makes sense, to help defend white's weak K. White might continue with h2-h4 and get a hiding place on h2. The problem is this gives black the initiative, and the K is not as safe as he appears there anyway. For example, 1…Qxc3 2.h4,c5! (White's d-pawn is doomed, and black's c-pawn will run) 3.Rxa7 (trying to maintain material equality, but fails to) 3…Qd4+ 4. Kh2, c4! Winning.

E) 1.Bxf7+!? I admire your courage! Most players I've shown this position to reject this move automatically because of 1…Qxf7. However, it is not so clear after 2. Qf4! with pressure. Black then has to find 2…Rf8! to win the game (2…Rd7? [or 2…Rxd3?] 3.Rb8+ followed by 4.Qe5 is strong). The rook on the f-file is deadly for white, i.e. 3.Rxc7, Qxa2 4. Qd4,Qb1+ 5.Kg2,Qc2+ 6.Kg1,Qd1+ 7.Kg2, Be4+! and mates.

5) John Nunn – James Plaskett, 1977 ANSWER: E

Background: Two future English GMs meet when they were young. John Nunn went on to be a top player. In this position he is up the exchange but his rook is attacked and somewhat pinned to black's Q on d7, which would capture on h3 if given the chance with great effect.

A) 1.Rxf7. The natural move, but it fails tactically. 1…Bc5+ is allowed for black, and now 2.R1f2 is forced (2.Kh1?? Qxh3 and the Q is lost). After 2…Bxf2+ 3.Rxf2, Qxh3 4. gxh3, Nf5 white has only a minimal endgame advantage.

B) 1.R5f3. This offers the exchange back, but black can just take it. 1…Bxf3 2.Qxf3 and white doesn't really have any attack if black is careful, and meanwhile all endgames are good for black with his outside passed pawn. 2…Qe6 3.h4,Be5 is fine.

C) 1.R5f2. Another exchange sacrifice that doesn't work: 1…Qxh3 2.gxh3, Bc5 =

D) 1.Rh5!? Adventurous! Black has to go into: 1…gxh5 2. Qxh5. Here white has sacked a piece and has many threats. But black has a beautiful defense 2…Qe8! He is ready to play …f5 to stymie white's attack by blocking the bishop while also hitting white's Q. Apparently to get a draw here white must find 3.Rf6! Bc7 4. Bg7,Ng6 5.Bxg6, Qe1+ 6.Rf1, Qe3+ 7.Qe1+ leading to a complex draw, according to the computer.

E) 1. Bg7!! Is the 'something else' that wins easily. Instead of worrying about the attacked rook, white has a simple direct way to win! This move threatens mate, and there is no time to take the rook. Also black can't take the B because of 2.Rxf7+ and 3.Qh7mate. That leaves only spite checks for black after 2…Bc5+ 3. Kh1, Bxg2+ but they go nowhere.

Tay, Brian (1980)
Amburgy, Ryan (2185) [B15]
Charlotte Spring Classic (3), 27.03.2021
[Notes by TB]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6

The recapture 5...gxf6 was favored by the inventive GM Bent Larsen and others in the '70s. But the other recapture with the e-pawn 'away' from the center has also been recommended as a simple system for Black. In theory, it is bad -- because it leaves white with a 4 vs 3 pawn majority on the queenside, whereas black's majority is compromised. In endgames white can create a passed pawn but black cannot. On the other hand, black's king will be safer with an extra pawn protector, and black's development will be easy.

6.c3!

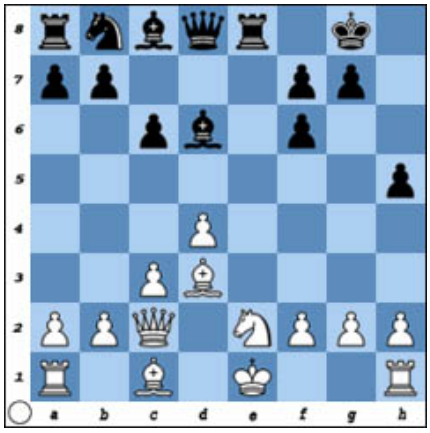
This move has long been considered to give white the better game. I employed it to win a game against senior master Jude Acers in 1980! White simply protects the d-pawn so that he can play Bd3 next move. (Using the N to protect the pawn allows an annoying B pin.)

6...Bd6

It's not recommended to try to head off white's scheme with 6...Bf5 as the B gets uncomfortable if it stays on this diagonal. Ne2-g3 is a good response for white. 7.Ne2 Bd6 8.Ng3 Bg6 9.*Be2 etc.*

7.Bd3 0-0 8.Qc2 Re8+ 9.Ne2 h5!

The players have proceeded down the main line and now Ryan employs the modern idea for black here. The pawn move looks weakening, but it is annoying to white. The old move 9...h6 allowed white to 0-0 and have a strong attack with Ne2-g3-f5.



And the old alternative 9...g6 also was often played but encouraged white to play a quick h2-h4-h5 and attack down the h-file, with queenside castling.

Sticking the pawn on h5 discourages both those plans. Black is ready to meet Ne2-g3 with ...g6 or ...h4. Indeed, in this game white never even comes close to getting an attack going on black's king.

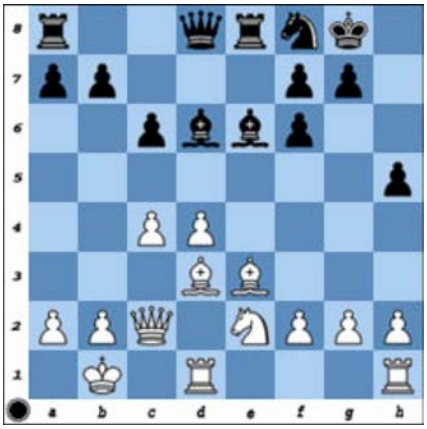
10.Be3 Nd7 11.0-0-0 Nf8

The main line. This N does a great job defending black's K and allows black time now to set up for counterplay on the queenside. Notice that not only is it covering the h7 square, but also g6. In some lines black can be forced to play ...g6, but now if he does that then this N prevents white from sacking a B on g6 in that case. Ryan said he had previously been trying ...b5!? here instead, but this time switches to the main line.

12.Kb1 Be6 13.c4

[Ryan's opponent follows the main line move but I have to wonder why white plays this move. In many lines of the Caro-Kann black actually hopes for this move so that he can use it to open lines against white's king with ...b5. Doesn't it give black opportunities for grabbing the initiative, as Ryan does in this game?

Instead, 13.Ng3 makes more sense to me, trying to induce weakness on black's kingside and fighting for the initiative. For example: 13...g6 14.Ne4 f5 15.Nxd6 Qxd6 16.Qd2 looks attractive to me, with ideas of Bf4 as well as engineering g2-g4 soon. However, my computer is unimpressed and calls the position even.]



13...b5!?

Ryan plays a theoretical novelty. Ryan comments about it, “I knew b5 was an idea in these type of positions, attacking queenside after white castles long. I thought it was a good way to start the attack and expected white to play either 14.d5, 14.c5 or 14.cxb5, after which I thought I was at least equal, but I totally missed the idea of 14.d5,cxd5 and then 15.c5! Then the engine says black has to give up the exchange. Fortunately, my opponent missed it too!”

GMs have prepared this move by playing the R to c8 first: 13...Rc8 14.h3 h4 15.Rdg1 b5 16.c5 Bb8 17.Nc3 b4 18.Ne4 f5 19.Nd6 Bxd6 20.cxd6 Qxd6 21.Bxf5 Qd5 22.Bxe6 Nxe6 23.Rd1 Qxg2 24.Qf5 Qd5 25.Qg4 Nf8 26.Qxh4 Qe4+ 27.Qxe4 Rxe4 28.Kc2 Ng6 29.h4 Nxh4 30.Kd3 Rg4 31.Kc4 c5 32.Kb3 cxd4 33.Rxd4 Rxd4 34.Bxd4 Nf3 35.Bxa7 g5 36.Kxb4 Ra8 37.Be3 Rxa2 38.Kb3 Ra8 39.Kc2 Rc8+ 40.Kd3 Rb8 41.Ke4 g4 42.Kf5 Rxb2 43.Kxg4 Ne5+ 44.Kf5 Ng6 45.Ke4 ½-½ Saric,I (2669)-Howell,D (2676) 2017

14.c5

The crucial moment of the game. White decides to try to keep the queenside closed, which is the usual response. However it is not the best move. Also bad would be to grab the offered pawn with 14.cxb5 cxb5 15.Bxb5 For a measly pawn white opens lines against his own king and will be defending for a long time to come. Not a good idea, even if the computer says it slightly favors white. Instead, white had the opportunity to use some tactics that work out in his favor: 14.d5 cxd5 15.c5! (Notice that if Black's R was already on c8 this move would not be threatening the bishop!) 15...Rc8 16.Bxb5 compared to the game you can see black's pieces are stymied here and he will either have to sac the exchange or allow himself to be tied up, i.e.: 16...Nd7 17.c6 Ne5 18.Nd4 Qa5 19.Qa4 with a pleasant edge for white.

14...Bc7 15.Be4

This move fails to achieve its aim after Ryan's reply, and soon Ryan is tromping all over white's light squares. Instead white needed to compete for the initiative with the sacrifice of a pawn to open the center and make black's pieces uncomfortable: 15.d5!? Qxd5 *(15...Bxd5 16.Nc3!)* 16.b3 Qxg2 Strangely, black is forced to take this second pawn, but it opens the g-file and gives white compensation with chances of an attack. Still the computer gives as its main line a continuation where black regains the initiative: 17.Be4 Qh3 18.Ng1 Qg4 19.f3 Qh4 20.Bxc6 g6!

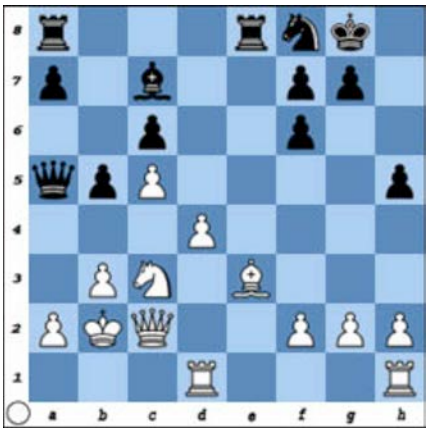
15...Bd5 16.Bxd5 Qxd5 17.Nc3 Qc4!?

The computer prefers to grab the g-pawn. But, "Don't try that at home."

18.b3 Qb4 19.Kb2

The reason why the compy preferred to grab on g2 was this variation white had: 19.d5! Be5 20.Ne4! cxd5 *(20...f5 21.Nd6 Bxd6 22.cxd6 Qxd6 23.dxc6)* 21.Rxd5 Rad8 with a slight edge for white.

19...Qa5



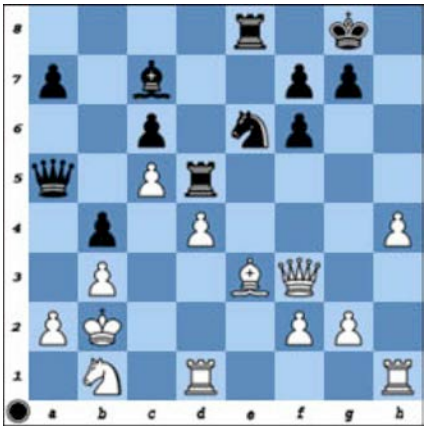
20.Qf5

White goes after a pawn, but now Ryan gets the initiative he's been fighting for. Again 20.d5 is better. But humans instinctively don't want to blatantly open the long diagonal against their king like that.

20...b4 21.Nb1 Rad8 22.Qxh5 Rd5 23.Qf3 Ne6

White's d-pawn is targeted. And now when it falls that B on c7 is going to come to e5 with crushing effect...

24.h4?



24...Nxd4! 25.Bxd4 Rxd4 26.Rxd4 Be5 27.Rhd1 Qxc5 28.Qe4 Rd8 29.Qc2 Bxd4+ 30.Kc1

[30.Rxd4 Qxd4+ 31.Kc1 Rd5 32.Nd2 Qxf2-+]

30...Qe5 [(idea ...Bb2+] 31.Rd2 Rd5 32.Kd1 Bxf2 0-1

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By IM John Donaldson

REVIEW:
Everyman's "The Iron English" and "The Grunfeld Defense"

Two recent offerings from Everyman Chess, both on openings, emphasize the interactive question and answer format that is the hallmark of this publisher. Both books are also organized around model games rather than the standard format for theoretical works of analysis followed by more analysis. This treatment and the prevalence of explanatory prose makes both *The Grunfeld Defense* (2021, 287 pages, $27.95) by Nigel Davies and *The Iron English* (2021, 462 pages, $29.95) by Simon Williams and Richard Palliser good choices for club players rated roughly 1800-2300.

The Grunfeld Defense

This is the second edition of Davies' work. His earlier book, which came out in 2002 and was 160 pages, was noted for the personal nature of the author's recommended variation, some of which were of the homebrew variety. This included 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bg7 7.Bc4 c5 8.Ne2 Nc6 9.Be3 0-0 10.0-0 e6!? which Davies credited to the French-Lebanese grandmaster Bachar Kouatly, but also made his own. This time around the English grandmaster favors a more mainstream approach (for example 10…Bd7 in the line mentioned above), but one that is decidedly less theoretical than other recent works on the opening including Alexey Kovalchuk's *Playing the Grunfeld* (Quality Chess 2020) and Alexander Delchev's *The Safest Grunfeld Reloaded*.

Newcomers to the Grunfeld will find this an excellent introduction.

The Iron English

Mikhail Botvinnik's name is associated with the pawn triangle c4, d3, e4, although technically he was not the first to use it. That would be Aron N*imzowitsch, although he would often put his bishop on e2 and his king knight on f3 – for example in the line 1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.e4. It was the "Patriarch" that perfected the system with a kingside fianchetto and the knight developed to e2 allowing White the potential to expand with f4.*

This system was first advocated by Tony Kosten in his 1999 book The Dynamic English. Two decades later Simon Williams and Richard Palliser have written The Iron English, which offers a similar but slightly different repertoire. This massive book, which comes in at over 450 pages, champions the Botvinnik Pawn Triangle when achievable and central oriented play when it is not. This includes not only the Mikenas Attack (1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e6 3.e4) but also 1.c4 c6 2.e4 and 1.c4 e6 2.e4. The material is presented first through model games and then reinforced with theoretical sections.

Those looking for a complete repertoire using the English, where the aim is to research familiar middle game positions, will find The Iron English an excellent guide.

Like all of Everyman's books both The Grunfeld Defense and The Iron English are offered in a variety of formats including print and e-book editions as well as in ChessBase format. Some of their new titles are also available on Chessable.

For more information, and for PDF and PGN extracts of these book, go to www.everymanchess.com.